

Sophia Belotserkovskaya



This is a picture of me, taken in June 2003 on the day of my interview with Centropa. I joined the Communist Party in 1948. I was a convinced communist. I never doubted any decisions or actions of the Party and believed communism to be the only right form of a state. I wasn't a party activist and didn't think of making a career in the Party, but I always attended party meetings and paid the monthly fees. I took part in preparations for Soviet holidays at work. I made a speech about the achievements of the Soviet people in industry and agriculture, the completion of plans by Soviet enterprises and illustrated my speech with specific data. I also conducted political classes for my colleagues and pupils and taught them about the international situation and the pace of our country toward communism. Even after I retired I was involved in many party activities. I held

lectures about the advantages of communism in various institutions. I saluted perestroika in the 1980s and spoke my mind about my attitude towards everything new that came into our life. At last my eyes opened and I understood what horrible lies had been surrounding me throughout my life. There were publications about the horrors of life in camps and the terrible injustice of life in the USSR that was camouflaged by propaganda from citizens and outsiders. I left the Party in 1990, even before it was eliminated. I submitted my request to be expelled from the Party due to my old age. Regretfully, I wasn't brave enough to write openly what I thought - that the Party had outlived itself, that it was a party of murderers and that I didn't want to be its member any more. However, I believe that my action to leave was also brave in a way. I appreciate independent Ukraine. I believe that, although the current situation is difficult, especially for pensioners, this time will pass. Regardless of my old age I read and write my memoirs and poems. I keep going to the Jewish Charity Fund, the Hesed, where I hold lectures about Ukrainian literature, poetry and theater. I get invitations from the Ivan Franko Theater where my father had worked for 40 years. I share my memories about my parents and the people who founded this theater. It's wonderful that Jewish life has revived in Ukraine and that the Jewish community supports its members like it used to before the Revolution of 1917. I can still do without assistance. I hate to ask for help and I'm happy to be of use to the community. It's great that people can return to their roots, go to the synagogue and observe the traditions of their ancestors. I read a lot about Jews, Jewish life and traditions. It's interesting, but then history of any nation is of great interest to me. It's difficult to change at my age, though. I've never observed any Jewish traditions.